TO: EDCI 6158

FROM: Elizabeth Cooper

DATE: May 23, 2012

RE: Curriculum Proposal to Fight Plagiarism Among High School Students

As you are aware, the issue of plagiarism is ever-present in nearly all classrooms within our school. The influence of technology has changed our approach to socializing and learning; this is especially evident among our youth. This means that new approaches in understanding and teaching our students are now necessary. I am proposing the implementation of “Phase Out Plagiarism”, a one-week workshop to take place at the beginning of each school year where designated English teachers in each grade level will assess student knowledge on the subject of plagiarism while informing them of the importance of maintaining academic integrity. School and class rules regarding the issue will be clearly established before students are too far along in their studies.

“Phase Out Plagiarism” could be useful in that it will help teachers to understand student motivation when plagiarism occurs. Teachers will be expected to facilitate discussion on the subject to gauge their knowledge and clear up any misunderstandings. The teacher will also allow time to work on a small assignment and an opportunity for peer review. It is important that students are able to model practices relevant to their grade level and opening their work to peer review may create an academic environment where original thoughts are valued and research is encouraged. High school age students tend to value the opinions of their peers. At the end of the week, the students will sign a contract stating they understand what plagiarism is and that they are aware of the consequences if found plagiarizing during the school year.

Our school has set the standard in our county for academic excellence. We should take measures to ensure that it is a reputation well-earned. Teachers are not to ignore plagiarism when it occurs or penalize students due to lack of understanding. Part of our school policy is to create classrooms where students feel safe, supported and where both teacher and student can hold one another accountable. This workshop can help to achieve that.

The plagiarism workshop will occur within the first month of the school year, to be completed no later than August 30, 2012 by teachers designated within the English department. It is my hope that this workshop will be on-going, to occur at the beginning of school each year to guarantee that students are building on a good foundation. There are no costs to the program but it is dependent upon teacher cooperation and patience. While our school’s issues may be exposed to the district as a whole, we will serve as an example to education and the community for choosing to handle the problem instead of ignoring it.

Thank you for your consideration,

Elizabeth Cooper